Working abroad from India

Your rights under the law of India, and where to get free help

What the law of India says

Agency fees — PARTIAL
The law limits fees, or bans them only for some jobs or countries.

Written contract — PARTIAL
A contract is required, but not for every worker, or the government does not check it.

Training before you go — NONE
No training is required.

Insurance or welfare fund — PARTIAL
A fund or insurance exists, but it covers only some workers or some risks.

Help line — PARTIAL
There is an official help line, but not 24 hours, or not in every country.

A lawyer abroad — PARTIAL
The government may pay for legal help abroad, case by case.

Safe place to stay — PARTIAL
Some embassies have a safe place to stay.

Complaint at home — PARTIAL
A complaint can punish the agency or get your fees back. For other money owed, you go to court.

This is what the law says. What happens in practice can be different.

MAIN LAWS

- Emigration Act 1983

Before you go

1. Keep a photo of your passport, visa and contract on your phone. Give copies to your family.
2. Ask for a receipt for every payment to an agency.
3. Save the numbers on this page before you leave.

Free help

Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendra (MADAD helpline)
1800 11 3090
madad.gov.in
Free 24-hour helpline of India's Ministry of External Affairs for Indian workers abroad and their families, in 11 languages.

Justice Without Borders
justicewithoutborders.org
Helps migrant workers bring claims in the country where they worked, even after returning home, with pro bono lawyers.

We list a phone number only when we have checked it.

Court decisions that helped workers

We are still collecting court decisions from India.

Help in the country where you work
theimr.org/legal-help

More detail and sources
theimr.org/countries-of-origin

New court decisions and laws, once a month, free
theimr.org/updates

General information, not legal advice. Made on 20 November 2026 from the open data of the Institute for Migrant Rights. Free to copy and share (CC BY 4.0).